

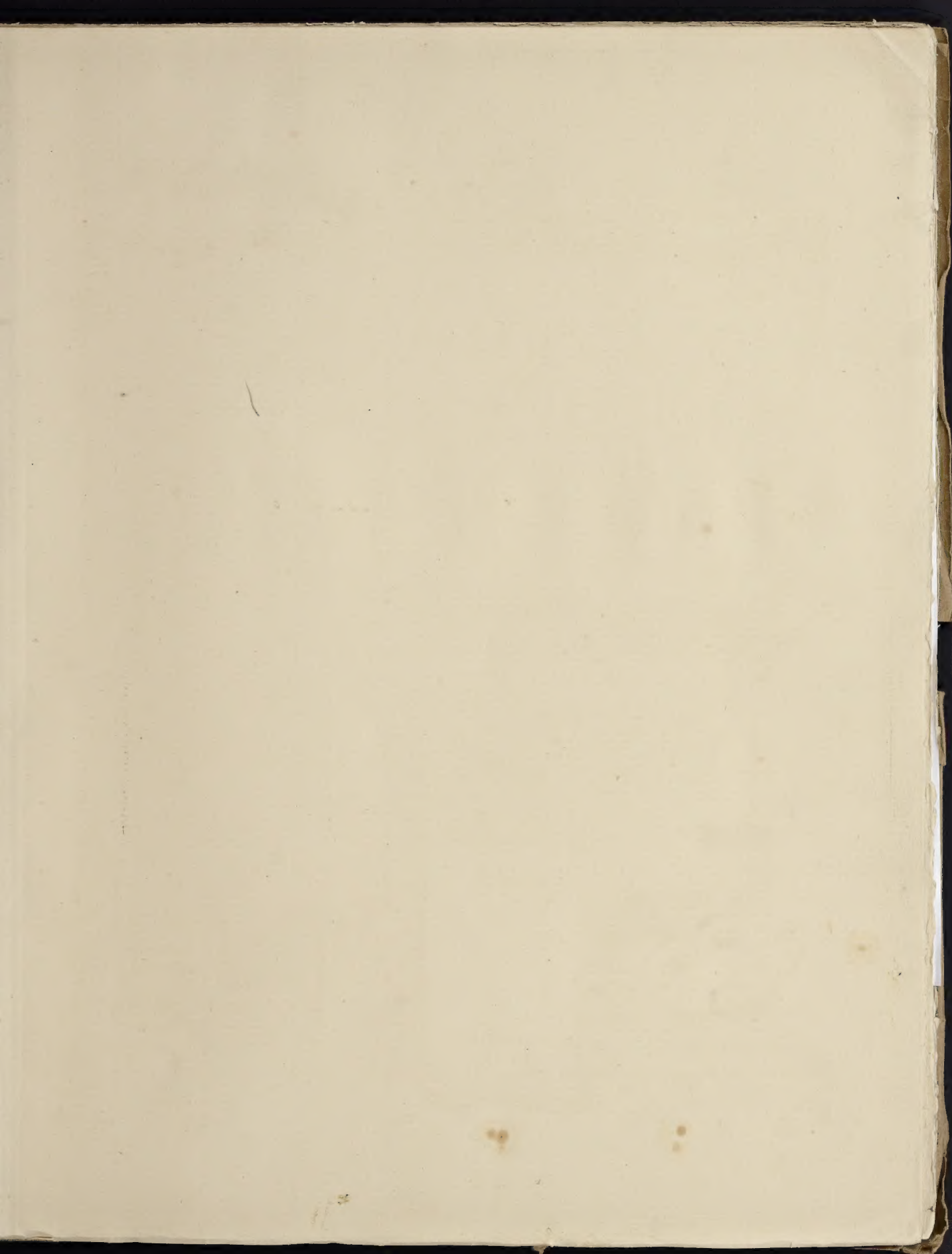


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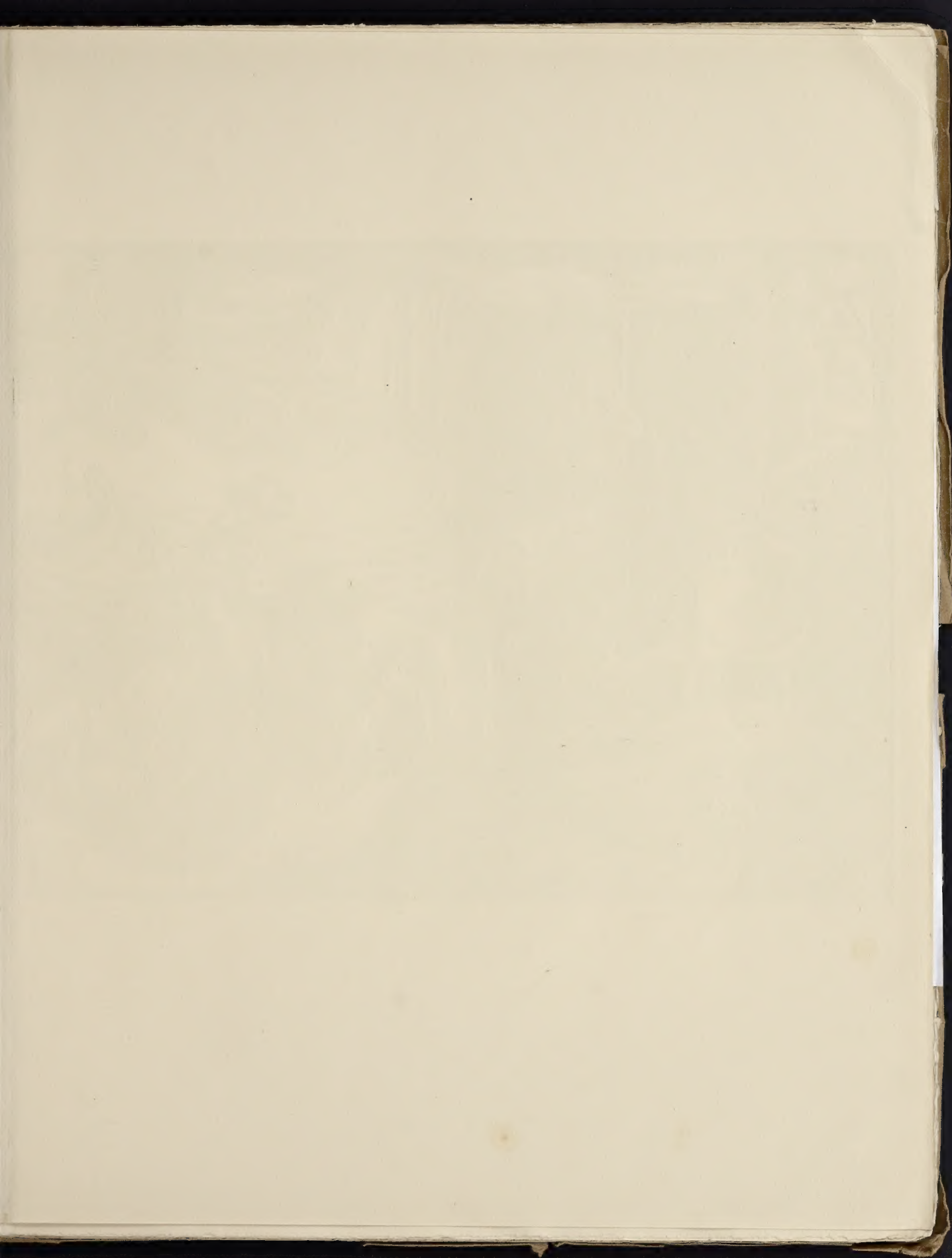
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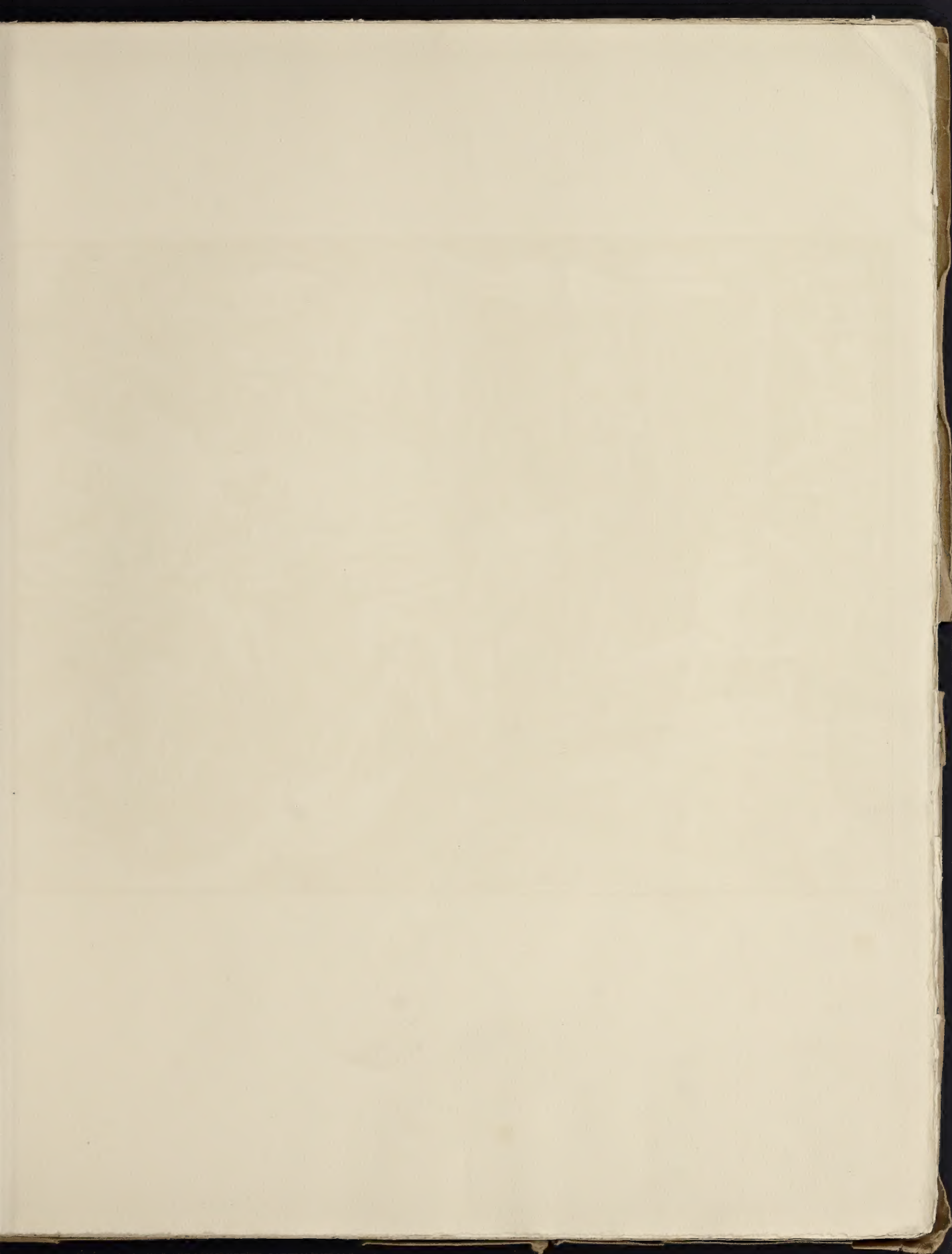
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PERSONAL NOTE

"POEMS DRAMATIC AND LYRICAL" THE PLATE
FACING PAGE 200 AND APPEARING TO ILLUSTRATE
THE POEM "THE PRODIGAL (AFTER ALBERT
DURER)" WAS DONE AS AN ILLUSTRATION TO A
DIFFERENT POEM BY LORD DE TABLEY ON THE
SAME SUBJECT "THE PRODIGAL" PAGE 435 "RE-
HEARSALS." THROUGH INADVERTENCE NO MEN-
TION WAS MADE OF THIS MISTAKE IN THE SECOND
EDITION OF "POEMS DRAMATIC AND LYRICAL"







DANAË.

Still, brilliant with bright brass, the tower derides
 The sun's gold shafts ; which strike and on all sides,
 Like ridicule-lit laughter, spread ; and some
 In bravery bend back whence they have come,
 And try their strength with those that come direct,
 With first impetuous potency unchecked,
 From the god's bow. For this the heat is great
 O'er all the land of Argolis of late.
 The king, Acrisius, hopes his tower may prove
 Impregnable to liquid light and love
 Rolled round it in a golden ocean-tide
 Whose ebb is a June night : and so all dried
 And dusty have the ways become ; the fields,
 They wind among, with grain a rich soil yields
 Should glow, not thus discover to the eye,
 Between scant straws, their crops, what black cracks lie
 And lengthen snake-like on baked brittle earth.
 Nor dewed nor girlish comes the Dawn, a birth
 Militant ; not a sole dwarfed hare-bell dares
 To laugh : Night's tearless glitter naught repairs.
 Old Inachus scarce finds the strength to stretch
 On his hot bed—stirs like a fevered wretch,
 And limps round stones—so feebly seaward creeps.
 While in the tower-top small Danaë sleeps,
 Unconscious how a god close, closer steals
 Across her painted prison-floor, nor feels
 His burning kiss the hand he reaches first.
 She sleeps half-swooned : with sweat her brow has burst ;
 Pale lips apart show teeth like maids in bower,
 Nor past them has her sweet breath stirred this hour.

Leaves lap and overlap, and trees ; the lily,
 Deep-delled and fragile, grows up very stilly,
 Decked with bead-bells adroop, yet so abashed,
 She sees but couch-moss by rill-frolic splashed.
 So silken shade and shawls of varied hue
 Hid Danaë's limbs which whiter daily grew ;
 And nothing saw she, save her room's few things,
 Beside the well-conned window-view ; and brings
 Each year no increase to her life's thin store
 Of sights—the only one not known before
 A larger loveliness, that might be found
 By searching the great mirror's polished round :
 Which had advent so imperceptible
 It dwelt unnoticed there ; although, whimsical,
 She loved to see—no soil of levity

In her fresh silent mind—in nudity,
 No flush-faced shame dared hinder to enjoy,
 Her beauty—purely with no least alloy
 Of vanity, since she had never seen
 Eyes like to those which modest maidens screen
 Themselves from, neither knew that any girls
 There were less fair than she, or who wore curls
 Less copious or of poorer purple sheen
 On lustre-lacking black. Oft would she lean
 As through a thunder-rain, while combing it,
 Nor then alone before her mirror sit;
 For when—cool after washing with well-water,
 Nurse daily stooping up the steep stair brought her—
 She gravely sat to musingly commune
 With her companion-self a June forenoon,
 To gain a smile's return sometimes she smiled.
 Since off her nurse's knee at first, beguiled,
 When little, by the bright resemblance to
 Her young glad life, she tottered towards the new-
 Perceived child, whose fresh rosy limbs resembled
 Eros' own in deep-dimpled mould, and trembled
 Like cress-framed skies gladdened to recognise
 Another blue,—deception friendly-wise
 Lingered, though she no longer patted, pleased
 To meet a pud like hers, and, seized
 With love, put out her lips to join the lips
 Out-thrust to them: no Years' hand quite down-strips
 The veil with child-dreams broidered; in her head
 Still someway separate existence led
 The twin, and not so much more silent, sister
 With her up-grown. Not once had she yet missed her,
 As o'er their earliest chubby limbs had come
 A gradual change, a whimsical, winsome
 Awkwardness peeping out till plumpness went:
 O'er salient points a certain tightness lent
 A peevish pinched appearance; in sight too
 Their shoulder-blades moved looselier; a new
 Sly meagreness had crept o'er them; as shoots,
 They sprouted up to taller growth; like roots
 Sent down into dark mould, grew whiter daily.
 Strange inner effervescence sparkled gaily
 Out through their eyes. The undecided place
 Of budding breasts, dissimulating grace
 As March flakes feign the snowdrop's calm, shows forms
 Hazy like mushrooms when the night-time warms,
 That globe and gleam, yet leave the stars in doubt
 If on the dewy slopes they shift about.

When moulds the potter on his whirling wheel
 Dumb clay, a hint of final curves will steal
 From clever hands in sapience sure ; just so
 Quaint querulous suggestions of a flow
 Of contour simpler, more capacious, slips
 From God's thumb when he moulds a woman's hips.
 Her thighs will lengthen faster than they round,
 Till their delightful devious line be found.
 The heels, too narrow, of the little feet
 Will give her steps a wayward wav'ring sweet,
 As when, unpropped, the heavy dahlias lean,
 Her head nods, nods. A mere caged white-mouse, seen
 Through close-strung wires, will writhe its sleek length high,
 And hold with pinky paws, and seem to sigh
 As, sniffing tainted air, it seeks a vent
 From prison ; and then scurries back, as bent
 On finding in the oft-searched farther end
 Some small escape ; and, since its birth there penned,
 Yet lives on, never losing childish hope
 Somehow eventually its sense may cope
 With most perplexing life-imprisonment :
 Thus Danaë, with like hopeful discontent,
 Led to and fro her white shape in her life's
 Wall-hampered home ; and still this useless strife's
 Fatigue can barely disappoint a mind
 So scantily versed in freedom, or unblind
 To fate's fell force eyes closed by charity
 To real and might-be sights' disparity.

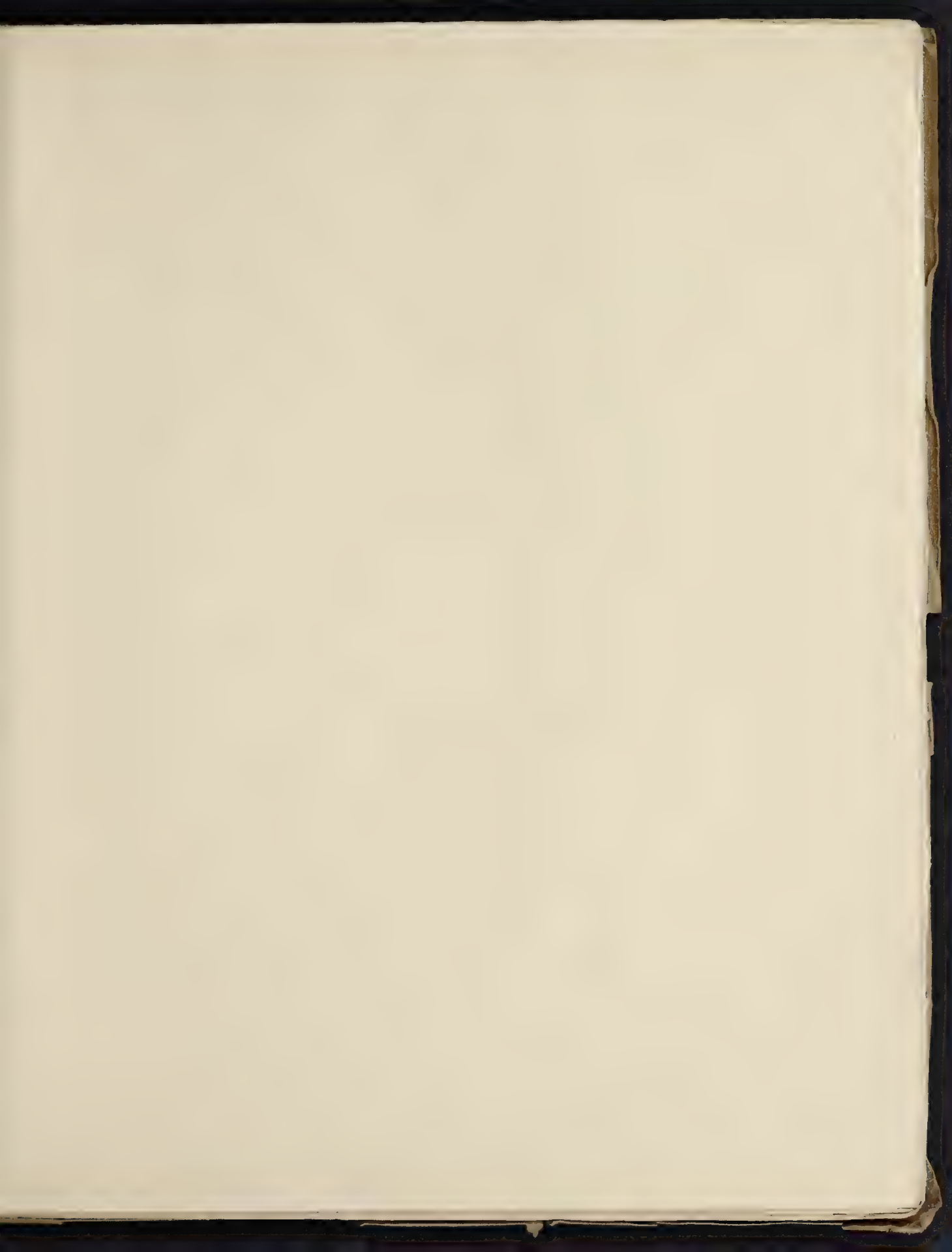
Now, like whole fallen statues on old lawns,
 Deep puzzles for the country-minded fauns
 Who peep, the sisters sleep. While mimic sun
 Up one outstretched arm, cautious, crawls, up one
 Real sun-lips yearn, aquiver yet to scare,
 So lose, their prize ; who Zeus is well aware
 Lies not apurpose in his path. From fear,
 He e'en forbids the swallows twitter near.
 For daily—when, bold grown, some hour entered
 In at her casement high, he has e'en dared
 Come close up to the tall embroid'ring frame—
 Just as his fingers set her wools aflame,
 She started up to move more in the shade ;
 Still on he crept, and still she was afraid
 To feel his touch ; so his light widened, till
 Was left, except beneath the window-sill,
 No shade ; there crouched she in the broad'ning belt
 And watched the crimson of his last rays melt.

She

She liked to see and dodge him round the room,
Which was great fun ; he gone, all grew to gloom.

'Twas then of old her nurse would lift her where
She might well watch old darkness overbear
The youthful light whom all things plead for—sheep
Who bleat and lowing herds and, half asleep,
Birds, ever loath to note how day's cup fills
With joy ; and stables, then, and woods and hills
Hush up ; nymphs, centaurs, folk with tails and horns,
Settle themselves in nooks near lulling bourns.
Then, floated to her head, came children's chatter,
And she, it may be, startled by such clatter,
Would let her eyes droop down to dark'ning earth,
And watch them playing in their noisy mirth.
Perchance they, quarrelling, fell by the ears
For some small sudden play-chance ; then her tears
Ran fast, and such upheaving sobs would rend
Her slight frail frame as would not know an end,
Till she was tucked up in her neat white bed ;
When would commence a coursing through her head
Of wond'ring queries, how their love and hate
Were roused, till stunned by sleep importunate.

So tall and slender later on she grew
That, planted on a footstool, she could view
The many lanes that led up through the fields,
In which—towards where a deeper shadow shields
First-fallen leaves, while the withdrawing sky
Pities feet slow in dust—two wandered by
Who late, in most reposeful country life,
Have found unrest and something of the strife
Of hearts, which cruel Eros loves to see.
What balm was theirs to soothe ? as peacefully
They went, arm-linked, what made them so content
In silence thus to walk, together leant ?
Boundless and vague, deep wishes welled in her ;
Wide grew her eyes ; and through the echoing air
A memory—sad, single, precious scrap
Of love-lore—sang,—while round her eyes she'd wrap
Her hair to blind them,—what she once had heard
A poor girl sing :—so sorrow's tide recurred.
“ Haste thee, haste thee to my arms ;
Empty
Hang they, voided of thy charms.
Marry me ! ”





Like some sick leaf, a fierce wind hunts alone
 Proving its gold rings false on stem and stone,
 This feather from Love's wing to Danaë blew.
 Ignorant of his name was she, nor knew
 Aught of his antic gambols with the maids,
 As, when she questions, her old nurse upbraids.
 For the crook'd crone has had instruction strict,
 To see how 'tis she lets herself be tricked
 To talk of love, men's manners, women's wiles;
 Therefore, well-taught how innocence beguiles
 The weak lips to unwise discovery,
 Has bound her tongue to stay most silently
 Within her mouth, till grown so taciturn
 Her gossip's-heart has learnt to never yearn
 For converse, though she truly loves the child—
 Who, the song sung, let loose her hair and smiled.
 Soon lifted eyes were tempted off anew
 Among the stars, those eyes most simply true,
 Thought but small holes drilled through a roof, the sky:
 What should she know of gods or destiny,
 Of Zeus, sky-king, or Kypris and her doves?
 What was to tell of them except their loves?
 No prayer she said; nor had she learnt to muse
 How life's a dream, or of the soul that sues
 For speech from out the frigid lips of fate;
 Nor knew she aught of the omniscience great,
 Or how her small mind some would father so.
 Yet there of mystery was what she might know,
 Who had found tokens in her tiny round,
 That little limit of her life was ground
 Sufficient for a larger lovelier growth,
 Attaching meanings to the light: how loath
 It was to shine, she thought, by such small holes,
 When the vast void, through which the day's sun rolls,
 It could flood, driving forth the sad dark sea
 Of night; yet could not clothe her sweet fancy
 In words. Since her vocabulary small,
 Drafted from out her nurse's, could not call
 Her thoughts by name, she smiled them to her side,
 A mind's eye-harvest sweeter, not more wide,
 Than filled a miser barrel's critic-round
 Of sky-blue. Disentangled and unwound,
 Her idea of the home of blessedness,
 Whence stars shone, could not bind such vague distress
 As bosky gardens feed in glow-worm eyes,
 Peering through gloom, whence if a tuft arise,
 'Tis shown by light which haunts them like a ghost,

Those

Those few tufts just the things her life loves most.
 Her swoon's dream is, that she, transported thither,
 Loves, wanders, close-companioned, near a river;
 Un-characterized the friend, whose arms embrace her
 Slow pacing down a path star-daisies trace there.
 Meanwhile, at home and far from such a place,
 The sun, stretched o'er her, showers on her face
 Kisses, that meet no blush, nor dint the snow;
 Thus summer wastes, for all the high peaks know,

Her life, love-stinted over-much,—for, save
 Her nurse, no one to love, or that could crave
 Her love, she knew—had let heart-worship fall
 Portioned to dead things—as some silken shawl,
 That she would hold against her cheek, kiss it,
 Space out, and bid its folds her fancy fit;
 Till thus an afternoon was whiled away,
 Fondling its foolish yards. Another day
 Brought flowers that came in pitchers, or a load
 Plumping an apron, or else singly stowed
 In with the butter, sprinkled o'er the fruit,
 Or making dewy nests for eggs. First mute
 For gladness, next with clapping hands on feet
 That totter with impatience, see her greet
 With airy kisses little friends—small eyes
 Glorious with gazing on the liberal skies,
 Sent by the open-hearted folk who wonder
 “How fares small prisoner princess penned up yonder?”
 Next in her favour stood some exile shells—
 Large lips, agape with wonder-working spells
 Which the ear hearing, vainly the mind strove
 To dredge a meaning from. So, oft she wove
 With nets and toils of hair one to her ear,
 Deep in that cushion sunk she found most dear,
 Her feet out-thrust on th' mat most to her mind
 Because, 'mid green waved lines, it showed a kind
 Of ready needle-pictured likeness to
 Her whole bare body, over which there flew
 Much smaller portraits of herself, as she
 Is to her mind brought back by memory.
 As thus she sits, her treasures piled about,
 Words foil her ears that, in a sailor's, shout—
 “Aphrodite,
 Each wave mothers
 Thine almighty
 Form; uncovers
 It each breeze,

Thee to please,
And to tease
All thy lovers."

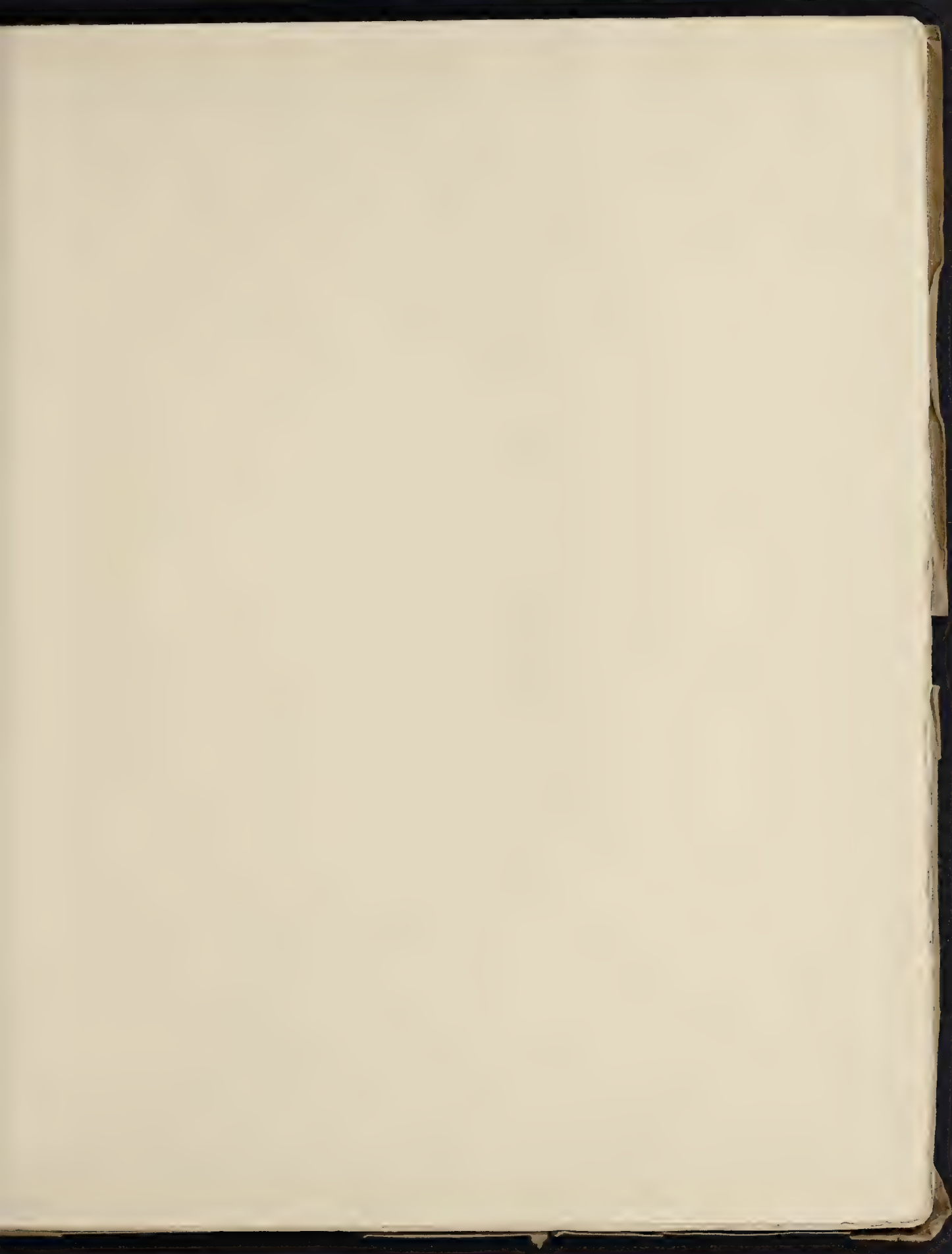
Sun down, the thick swoon from her body lifted:
So, with trailed wings, is some slow eagle shifted
By fed uneasiness. A vivid grey
Blinded her; night's cold coming drove away
Her sense once more: she slept, while pain did drum
With muffled hands her temples dull and numb.
Confusedly capricious dreams have wrung
Those tones from her with which that girl had sung,
While, like sea-chants climb twisted stairs to bed,
Male words through dainty doors have reached her head.

And from that night, as some fond woman sits
Beside her love, she with the sun, when its
First matin wealth plunged on her shoulder, till,
Having bathed and blessed her, it slipped o'er the sill.
So changed she was, life wholly seemed becalmed.
All summer-wonts, too, lingered unalarmed;
For the fierce forest-fires of autumn sped
Slower, glowed larger with less hectic red,
To equal the great glow of July gold.
It seemed that ne'er, they fallen low, their cold
White ashes would be huddling round the farms
And choking in at doors. On false alarms
Birds flew to sea: still the bland weather stayed;
Oft, too, the roof of clouds, rent through or frayed,
On winter's lap let warm boons drop, to cheer
Men's hearts. Such fondling had the tower dear,
Where each and all those gleams are welcomed like
A lover's letter.

When young breezes strike
A tune, and Spring, spry wanton, comes, her nurse
Looks puzzled, makes her pinched up lips to purse
And her eyes blink, bewildered, at the maid,
Who goldly glimmers in the gleam,—afraid
They have not told her of the thing aright.
She falls to rubbing them with all her might;
For, what! a woman with child, no maid, she saw
Sit where the maid had sat a year before.
She fain had got to scolding but delayed,
So clear the eyes she met; and then she prayed
She might be much mistaken, and still knew
She was not; such a queer knot how undo?
For she had ne'er an instant left the tower,

Scarcely

Scarcely the room for much more than an hour.
 Who could have done this thing? O ye great gods!
 Walls, locks, and all man's cares make little odds
 To you, when once ye have a mind a thing
 Shall be: well may a man stare, whistle, sing,
 And blow upon his nails, if ye have entered
 With him a race on which perhaps had centered
 Dozens of spangled hopes—or life; 'tis one,
 And the race won before 'tis ever run.
 So, when a boy-child came to light, her father
 Had to be told he was grandsire; though rather
 His ears had heard his daughter, pined away
 In prison lone, was gone to swell, that day,
 The dim ranks of his dead, who wait in earth's
 Strongholds, all kings, or issue by their births
 Of kings, or queens, or queenly-mothered.
 He felt as though an ire-forged bolt o'erhead
 Was hurtling with intention, like the disc
 Young men in rivalry hurl, whereby great risk
 Is run by such as watch: so, all at once,
 Fear, worst midwife for action, did ensconce
 Herself within the unheroic head
 Of king Acrisius. Thus, straightway, from bed
 They drag poor Danaë, waked to foreign sights:—
 The dead night bruised and wounded by torch-lights;
 Rooms loud with jest, where girls dance wagers bare,
 Where wine-cups crashing wound no thrifty care;
 Close-huddled houses, lanes whence unfed howls
 Of unowned dogs disturb. All, which befouls
 A town, behind at length is left; the heels
 Of the guard, arm-weighted, clog in clay; she feels
 A fresh wet wind, and hears the weltering wash
 Of waters; then is lifted up, feet splash,
 And, when, set down again, she raised her eyes,
 She saw the simple stars, that in surprise
 Were crowded close together, and she, dazed,
 Lay like a fallen wing'd-thing; while the raised
 Male voices dwindled till the dipping oars
 Could make their rhythm felt. Then low-banked shores
 Parade black blotted groups of ilex-trees
 (The chest was hewn from such stout trunks as these,
 She floats in)—pyramids processional
 Of night-obliterated leaves, ranged tall
 Like mutes; while, like white lines of silent tombs,
 On either side behind the night-mist glooms;
 And like some broken-hearted woman bent,
 That heaves her hair with sobs,—as on she went—





A willow kneels among them here and there.
 The water wakes and louder wails to her—
 Nay, wails with old choked sorrows now no more:
 Triumphant shouts, borne from a sonorous shore,
 Break on her ears; and happy hurried airs
 Make haste—lest she, when shaken unawares
 On Aphrodite's cradle-rockers, fear—
 To whisper good-will tidings in her ear.
 A boat had laboured with the chest in tow:
 Dull wooden sounds faint; homeward it does go.
 All this long time she held her baby tight,
 And stared the poor stars out with all her might:
 Now, looking down, she sees his waking eyes
 Claim—as his curled gold locks the sun—the skies
 In parentage. She dandles in the air
 The pretty wanton; who then clips her hair
 In fist-fulls, crows, and o'er her shoulder spies
 Hermes with Zephyrs wing'd like dragon-flies,
 Who, watchful how such frolic crew behaves,
 Pilots them o'er blue inly-varied waves.
 So many blues, yet each unlike the other,
 Grow all greens, when a Zephyr flies his brother.
 In vain the gallant Hermes doffs his hat;
 For jealous Zeus gave strict commandment, that
 His messenger should do his duty, dight
 In form impalpable to mortal sight:
 Yet, well seen of the baby demi-god,
 He from the merry knave receives a nod
 Now and again. The far grey tower stands
 Against the north, as left by Night's rash hands
 On brilliant-breasted Dawn a bruise of blue,
 To fade as her hale pulse revives anew.
 This god-freed, god-loved woman hail aloud,
 Breezes! your king the sun mounts o'er a cloud.
 Swell your big-chested conchs, strain trumpet-throats;
 He hears and knows you, though she little notes.
 Still the sad silent home, that distance veils,
 Each moment bears behind, as on she sails
 To new life, lit with large affinities;
 And for her son Perseus what destinies
 Await, beyond the sounding straits that sunder
 Dead past from future life! Still sailing under
 The blood-thick blue, at length Seriphos, reared
 Above a million moving waves, appeared.

T. STURGE MOORE.

A NOTE ON GUSTAVE MOREAU.

IT is at first necessary to separate some of Gustave Moreau's characteristics from the loose admiration they have brought about. A dim recognition of his excellence has been caught by the current of opinion, for it has root in an old longing, that touch of *nostalgic* unrest we have, wrapped among the habits and renunciations forming our ways—in that truly spiritual leaven, to push circumstances at times beyond their common scope, in our craving for manna, at least, upon the alien sand. But whatever in the present finds self-expression in his work has, after all, gathered there into some special thing, lifted out and beyond the capacities of his surroundings; and the existence of so complete, so finished an art utterance amid the unkind haste of to-day becomes strange if one forgets for the moment how irresistible is all art growth, whatever may be its everyday conditions, how separate is always its real achievement, contemporary opinion concerning it being merely a matter of accident. If an air of pallour in its fruition marks this obstinacy in growth, art, nevertheless, has become gifted by the effort with a new sense of beauty, or one, that, for its degree, seems different from the older sense that was only enamoured of health; the temptation to see things by this newer knowledge will in part explain the fascinated return of the art mind to the past, for we watch it in perspective, conscious of its calm (tinged possibly with weariness), through an atmosphere coloured by the atoms of our many experiences and ways of thought,—through a subtle apperception of our weakness, become a subject also of interest in our half-longing return to that past, so divine in shoulder, so youthful in its immunity from failure. Yet such retrospective curiosity may prove new only for its present degree; one may be tempted to imagine it part of all art effort, in revolt from the immediate, were not opposition too partial, too limited in work, too separate from the grave sense of growth and expansion, that is art, to be of serious value as suggestion.

In a characteristic phrase Gautier once sketched this desire to possess the past with the added charm it now has for us; he ends with a mention of Flaubert as incurable in this matter, and Flaubert's correspondence teems with revealing touches evoked at the actual contact with facts meaningless to others as mere loose rubble or dust of the past, but, to his gift of divination, redolent of rare sensations, intense, even to the verge of awe; so that a stray aroma of rose or balm from the rent in some sepulchre conjured up to him the shapes, the passions of a world whose being, passed into his books, yields the essence of that magic he felt so keenly, with much, to the reader, of that sunset glamour, of nostalgia.

This love of forgotten things joined to Flaubert's admiration for Moreau's pictures, has led to obvious comparison between the two artists, though a slight pause in judgment might show how false all such comparisons must be. With Flaubert that haunting force was vivid to create the real light of a possible past with each detail cast out into clearness, or troubled only by the emotions of his actors to whom these realities become

strange at times, as so many things must have been in those periods of unquestioning expression.

With the painter the case is all different, for Gustave Moreau remains a lover of mythical half-light, light not yet lost in the encroaching night nor absorbed by the approach of day, of emotions in a morning twilight when Cerberus, forgetting his chain, may wander beside dark pools, near ghostly reeds; for time, a thing so present with the author, has become suspended to the moment when neither ship nor god need be gone yet; and nothing is importunate with its reality. We are in a world only of mid-distances, bounded by low-breathing seas, with littoral towns against the sky; in a place where the passing of a bird, for its suddenness, is an emotion. Here are flowers with strings of crystals made sharp in hue and texture, for appeal to our visual-touch, to forbid the conviction that all this may be mirage, that his mystic creatures must soon vanish with the perfumes ceasing to breathe in those censers, and leave with us but a handful of aromatic dust, the dust of hair, dust of laurel leaf, and the glimmer in the grey of forgotten things; as, in ancient urns, we find a tarnished coin among the faded ash, a gilded siren as symbol of some story it is unable to recall. Thus all resemblance to Flaubert lies only in the compass of their hatred for the commonplace.

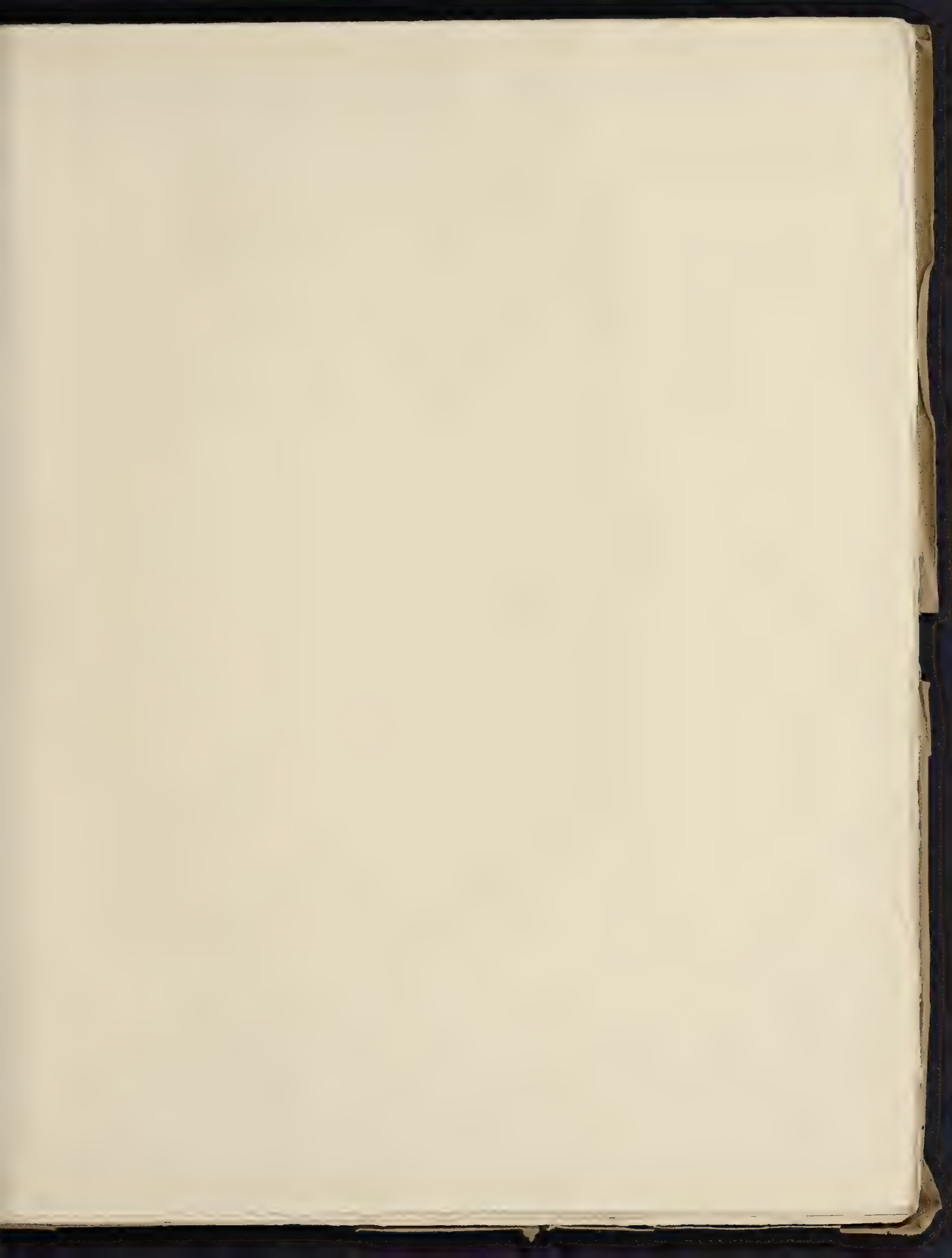
In a book of impressions on art (*Certains*) Monsieur Huysmans lays too great stress on the element of contrast in some designs Gustave Moreau executed toward the illustration of *La Fontaine*. With him, for the sake of critical emphasis, much of the painter's work becomes too paradoxical in means not to be somewhat mechanical. His descriptions elsewhere of other pictures, as well as this note, abound, it is true, with acuteness of feeling; they have unfortunately over-influenced subsequent criticisms more general in tone. It is through these, possibly, that Monsieur Huysmans' statements become annoying; nevertheless, in justification of him, Gustave Moreau's consent to become involved in such a task was strange it must be admitted, in some degree unlucky, none of the fables suggesting a subject fitted to his great, but entirely lyrical scope. Animals under unaccustomed conditions—at the best, persons sententious on manners—lay outside the world of his vision; not to seem purposeless, they had to be clothed with a new air of unreality, to move in the flora and cloud of a fairyland empty of those gracious figures that meet him there half-way, for his great knowledge of them. The number of these drawings became troublesome, and, despite the beauty of many, one turned with a sense of relief to other works where his handling, with its virile nervousness, moved with more freedom; where motives dear to him made quick his hand and pleased his vision, realising those instants so suggestive, when the fury of an act has passed or gathers into new purpose beneath skies flushed by an aftermath of sun that recall for their touches of orange and bands of brooding purple these words, "*quelles violettes frondaisons vont descendre?*"—words so expressive of that hush in nature, become strange in expectation of some countersign pregnant for the future.

It is against a sky like this an all-persuasive figure moves away, the head

head of Orpheus lies between her hands, and one scarcely knows if her fastidious dress, decked with so many outlandish things, has been clasped to her wrists and chaste throat in real innocence of the burden she holds mystically; but this hint of sentiment is too slight, too fugitive in the picture to become heavy or morbid. Enigmatic forms in contemplation move through other works; the *Salomé*, for instance, where she is already conscious of the doom between her and this face whose nimbus grows in the declining daylight, as the dawn might grow on a blind when the lamp goes out; the sky centres to a blood-like spot, half cloud, half garment of the executioner passing beyond, a fearful messenger to God. It is a spot of blood like this, in the shape of a little cloud above the sea—clasping in its most secret blue the future Rhodes,—that gives to the picture of Helen an undercurrent of doom to which the actors in it are half or all indifferent. This picture, unless my memory deceives me as to its execution, confirms his tendencies in one effort whose elements of beauty had haunted him before, but, till then, not achieved so supreme an aspect. From the brow of a cliff that is a town Helen moves, pedestalled on broken colours that creep upward across her dress in a succession of amulets and fronds, to twine and twist into frail leaves, with stray spilths of ruby towards the chalice of a blossom she holds near her face whose flesh is luminous against the samite sky. And below her rainbow garments in which the colours of the clouds and earth are married, so grouped and so clasped together to form part of the ramparts, are the wan faces and faded hands of those who, for her sake, have been won to Death; and their mouths smile yet, for, at the moment of death, when the lips grow wreathed, and the eyes profound, they have sunk into the arrested sleep of some Elysian place, to wait, with "that touch of irony that must have been Persephone's," their return to life, or the prolonging of their rest into this hour plucked from out of time. Thus, leaves of laurel and gathered buds are still in their hands, or the swords whose edge was fashioned against themselves. And that silent brotherhood, this buttress to the house that must not stand, is clothed with wreaths and incense haze, as if about a mystic sacrifice for which nothing can be too good, too strong, nothing too fair. What touch of foreboding may linger here smoulders, away in the cloud and horizon, for the artist does not tell if she, who found nothing but praise between the lips of man, and praise gazing from his eyes, is capable of happiness even; if hand over hand she is about to leave this place whose nights and days have become bitter with the ache of love and grief; if this phantom knows herself to be more than woman, a symbol in some divine semblance, and would exult could she know laughter or tears. In this picture Baudelaire's hymn to beauty has become visible, but purged of whatever, through the limitations of a language, may be touched by posture, epigram; and her eyes know they have no need to see.

Moreau has shown her elsewhere (in a small water-colour drawing, *L'Enlèvement*) under the closer light of actuality, imaginative actuality, but wrapped always in her separateness from blame. She leans softly in an amorous bend against Paris, on the foppery of whose Phrygian dress the

artist





artist has dwelt with minutest care, making it a delicate setting to her half-nakedness; the flight of their chariot drawn by willing horses is past a landscape of crags, the sky burns its passion out above the sea becoming black; and in the blue, among the rocks, the Dioscuri still on horseback are accomplices. The artist has abandoned the strenuous finish in workmanship of his masterpiece, to become rapid of hand in the pencilling of cloud and form, and by an afterthought, half poetic intuition, half sheer pleasure in colour, he has added a bird dipped in crimson as a stray envoy of Venus, accentuating by its aerial flight the buoyancy of the lines in the picture; for he is always lucky in such suggestive touches, and his shrewd sense of literary suggestion in painting never fails him.

Literature, by gradual process of appeal to the imagination, the sense of growth through which it brings things about, may show any incident, implying its degree of import in a hundred ways, conveying a sensation all pleasurably subtil, where the eye, called to view only a result, might find mere fact in illustration. Take the sonnet by Ronsard, whose subject at first sight would appear almost pictorial with its implied winter light and mirror gleam in which Helen, become old and wrinkled, muses sadly on her vanished beauty. Imagine it translated in painting with the implied splendour once hers only dimly shadowed forth, how uncertain would be the result dramatically; outside the field of words her momentary bitterness, or harlot's petulant frivolity, or whatever might make her more real to us, would become a record only of that mood.

In an early phase of his art one great painter has succeeded in painted narrative. When taking up the tangled threads of a remote legend, Rossetti has cast together under the search-light of an intense and generous imagination, not only the incidents of a story interwoven with new poetic additions and suggestions, but the almost digressive element of personal predilections (predilections with a touch of surprise, discovery) in circumstances and counter-incidents; shrinking from no complexity for his certainty of grasp in close-knit design and handling whose expressiveness never flagged.

With Gustave Moreau, the dramatic element is entirely evocative; one of undoubted intensity, but under lyrical and ornamental conditions his creatures would become troubled and shadowy indeed; if brought face to face with facts and real passions, they would swoon upon themselves, called back by some sudden Lethean murmur, or inner portent; their realities are confined to a few fair things fostered in the shadow of palaces and ravines, in the mists from rivers, where light, water and air have become resolved into the cold limpid colours of the topaz. The evidence of separate life, of the *without*, so hotly insisted on by Rossetti, is reduced to the half-fascinated wheeling, the circular-flight of a bird, fraught at times with great realistic point, as in the shrieking seamew that flashes across the fall of Sappho from the rocks. His choice is of half-mystic things, things of ritual; in this and his partiality for certain colour harmonies will be found his greatest limitation; yet in this lies also a sense of voluptuous melancholy so attractive to the spectator if unbiassed by the conventions of French and English habits.

The danger is great by over-emphasis to deprive a living thing in art, with its variety and many phases, of lifelikeness and freedom, as bad painters deprive their subject of all "undulation" by a rule of thumb they are pleased to consider completeness of rendering. The art of Gustave Moreau is living, varied and, like all living things, capable of that counter-change in virtue or personal force that is allowed even to divisions in nature, through force of will, desire, or in mere reaction and fatigue.

Therefore among his pictures some will be found very different in temper, pictures impetuous in dramatic feeling, as the *Diomède dévoré par ses chevaux*, in which the feet of the tortured man bend back with suffering, and his whole body is borne from the ground in its fall by a vehement gesture of cursing and the rush of his horses; the *Phaëton*, *L'Hydre de Lerne*, *Le Retour d'Ulysse*, the *Sapho expirante*. But these are largely a reaction from too long a brooding in his charmed habitual mood, and in a score of things they have a sense of nervous refinement, an implied languor in their rage, that groups them in his enigmatic world of terrible silences. Yet it is odd, not a little illustrative of the real lack of artistic activity now prevalent, that such works should be the only pictures that recall the autocratic, the over-bearing impetuosity of Delacroix, produced by one whose temperament might well have been averse to this frenzy.

To-day accusations of plagiarism are broadcast against very ordinary performances even, lest, in the hurry, one man should fortunately escape. With this great artist none of these accusations is reconcilable to the authentic stamp of his personality, drifting as they do between Mantegna, Turner, Blake! or vaguely the Italian masters.

Such questions are hopeless, such similitudes would have puzzled King Solomon himself; had it been on the subject of art similitudes that the bright queen wished to be enlightened, his wisdom might—who knows?—have been tasked beyond the powers of his divining ring, and that amulet of his, for the control of "loose spirits in their places and the very insects whose ways are in the sand."

An influence of Chasseriau has been put forward; an early picture, belonging, like the *Jason et Médée*, to a period of transition (of youthful ingenuity), will largely explain this critical impression, for Moreau inscribes it, in a dedication near the frame, to the memory of this dead artist. But the youth (in *Le Jeune Homme et La Mort*) who crowns himself on the threshold of Death's house, a handful of plucked flowers in his hand, is far removed in purpose from anything seen hitherto in French art, though some accents to the drawing remind one that Gustave Moreau was once the winner of a now forgotten Prix de Rome; and there is a difference of more than two art centuries between his shape and the passive figure of Death, whose work of destruction is left to an Anteros, too young, extinguishing a torch tricked with nightshade.

It might be difficult to account for so many opinions concerning the genesis of his pictures, did one not know the tendency in most people to discover similitudes through a lack of some genuine test to their impressions.

With the unaccustomed passer, trailing his feet about a gallery of antiques,

all remain alike as unaccountable things in stone; this casts an oblique light into much criticism that, before work fastidious in its expression, jealous of its point of view, will recognise the uniform stamp of refinement on imitation, and, till the word be found by others, expressing our indebtedness for this new knowledge, knows but the word Plagiarism, so smooth to the ears of indifference.

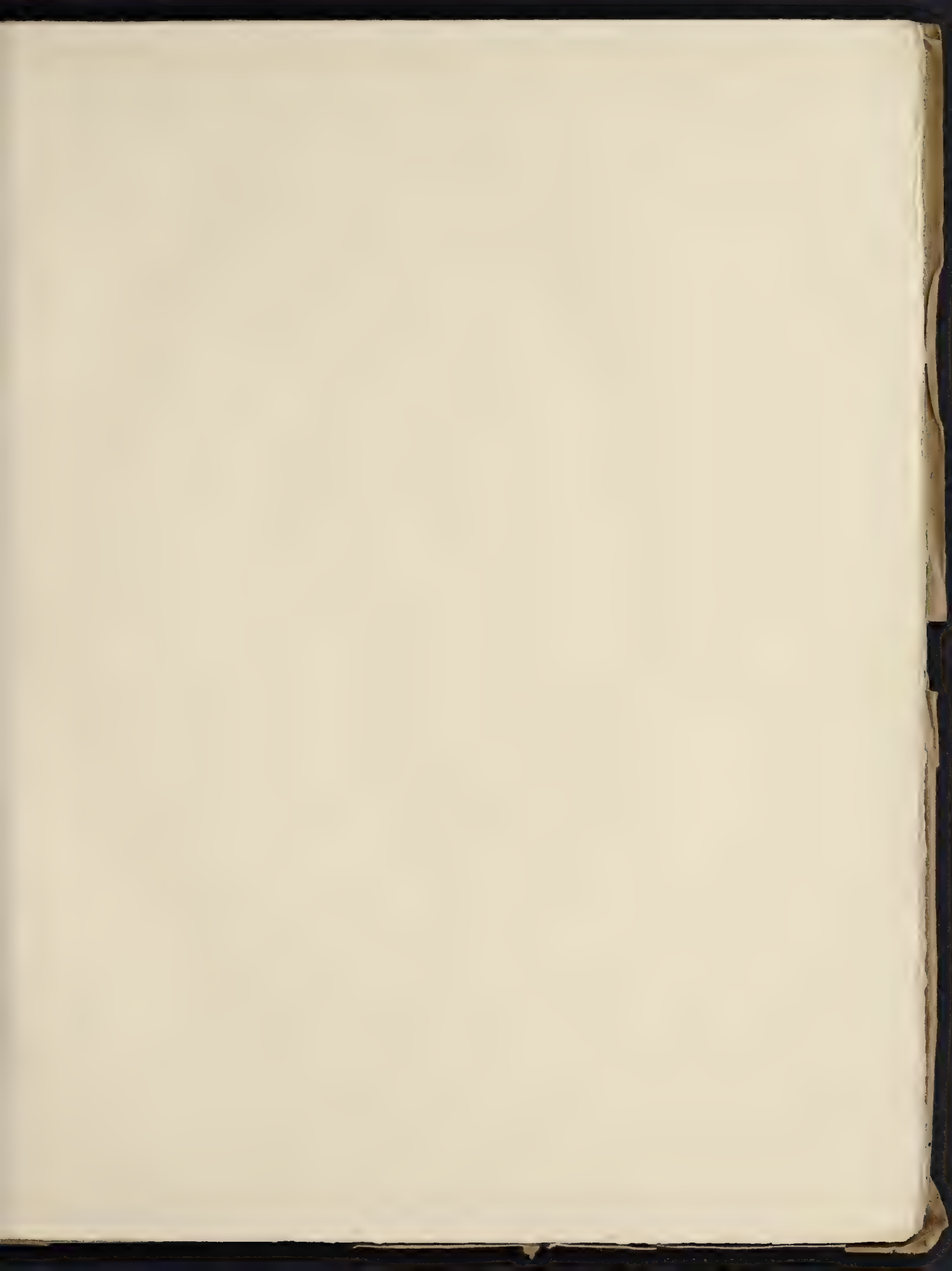
There are many unusual influences blent in the fabric of his creations, influences of many moods and memories, playing on them, drawing expression where they strike in some delightful iridescence of tone and thought. None would resolve the beauty of a crystal into known gases, in some arrangement of angles; and art, unlike natural products, besides its elements of composition, contains some of the divine initial force that brings it about in emanation, as it were, whose quality calls force to force. To experience the sense of fascination holding him at work; for its sake, to combine, to hoard, towards that season when this end is achieved, weaving positive time and emotions into it, must be the only way of enjoying work like his, certainly of no use to persons of acquired feelings, to whom all new effort remains objectionable and obscure. Yet the penetration of this obscurity is to find it enchanted with "spirit eyes"; this strangeness outside our immediate experience becomes a simple possession for to-morrow, winding as a stirring freshness might among the leaves, in that which each day brings of bud to bloom. In the wrack of the past ("that approximate eternity certainly ours") this artist has plunged, to bring with his return the evocative chime on chime of a new thing or message. One sentence of De Guérin's recalls to my mind not only this, his great gift, but, very curiously, the possible aspect of a picture by him; the lines describe a young fisherman whose body, for a moment swayed against the sky, plunges among the trouble of the waters, to return, his head sometimes radiant with wreaths.

His gift of renewing our interest in old, outworn subjects is revealed in many works—*Moïse exposé sur le Nil*, *La naissance de Vénus*, *David*. It would be difficult to imagine a more noble picture than this last for invention, yet more *intimate*, with all its splendour of detail, though, to some, the handling might seem thin, for the colour scheme growing into an evening silver. Each touch is indeed fortunate, from the waning of the incense to the faded lily David holds in guise of sceptre; this hush over all seems the soul of the dying man become mystery and colour, wherein a lamp burns whiter every instant; as each cloud sinks, the weight of a crown bends the royal head towards the hands whose grasp is loose; between the pillars with their symbols moulded in gold, against the marge of the horizon, a bird sings. But, at the foot of the throne, nestling like a dove upon a shrine, its limbs and body folded among the kingly vestments, is a visible spirit of God, clothed with the androgynous garments of the angels; the face has, with its awful joy, some suggestion of a Christ at the age when he disputed with the Doctors, and, by a touch of the imagination really inspired, the fingers of this apparition pass across the harp whose strings the king can no longer know.

Hantise is the word by which a new critic has conveyed the secret note

whose obsession strikes so weird a sweetness through the work of Gustave Moreau. And his art is verily haunted by that fantastic and goading spirit of perfection, who dwells always in the centremost chamber of the past; but his personal way of bringing this near to others remains his grave achievement. In a train of delicate purposes he passes a sponge across the lost hues of some ancient picture of passion, making it visible, not only for that moment but for many moments of return; he makes actual that which must be too frequently but the echo of a remote recollection, *nostalgia*, for lack of a better word, an emotion naturally decried of those passers, whose bread is the wreck and refuse from the sea of circumstance, and to whom this strange activity seems hectic, even dangerous.

CHARLES R. STURT.





SOME SHADOWS OF A THOUGHT.

Now, like the silence at the heart of song,
Art mars to make, hope's bow on life's rain-fall;
A gilly-flower, she tops the garden-wall
And shames the scare-crow weeds which, stunted, throng
In peace their paddock; she, the seed of wrong,
Maketh life's beauty's presence keen; a rope
Of seven sinful withes, she wards the slope
Which pilgrims to perfection climb along.

Her fittest likeness is a looking-glass :
To seize on beauty as life's pageants pass
She coldly, with a crystal ease, is skilled.
She deigns nor toil nor in the work-shed swelt
And strain; yet must gross metals glow and melt
Before her latest freak of form be filled.

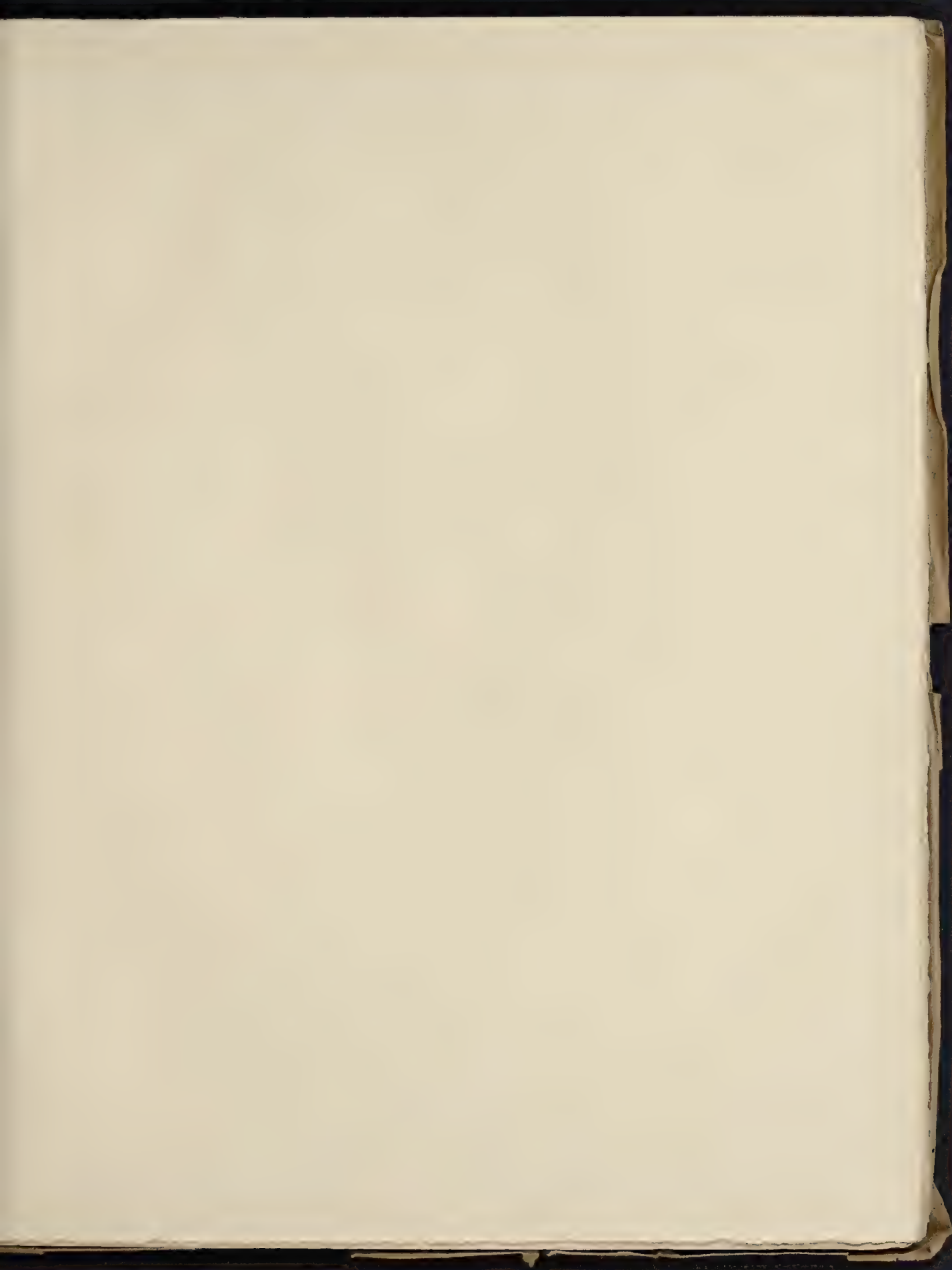
SONNET DE RONSARD POUR HELENE. LIVRE II.,
NOS. XLII.

When you, quite old, by night with candles, well
Up to the fire, wind skeins or spin, you'll keep
Crooning my verse and, plunged in wonder deep,
Say "Ronsard fames days when I was a belle."
And you will have no servant hearing tell
Such news, though bowed with labour half-asleep,
But shall, at sound of Ronsard, waking leap,
Blessing your name by praise made durable.

I, under ground and with nor bones nor thew,
A shade shall rest near shadow myrtles; you
Will by the hearth, old, crouching, scarce be blithe,
My love, your proud disdain for constant sorrows.
Live now, believe me, wait for no to-morrows;
Pluck even to-day the roses of your life.

THE PIMPERNEL.

The little pink pimpernel,
That border the way to the well,
They saw, they knew, and gazed their fill,
Though sorely against their will
Tied by their stalks to the earth;
And the angel who ruled o'er their birth
Forgot, it is said,
A tongue to each head,
So they had to keep dumb;
But they all blushed red
Like the nail of a girly's thumb,
When you bite it a bit
That a kiss may be
The healing of it.
And what did they see?
Why, from the well a woman all white
A woman all naked, fled out of sight!





SUGGESTED BY THE PROSE OF ARTHUR RIMBAUD
"ENFANCE."

This idol with black eyes and yellow hair,
Parentless, without court, and nobler far
In every land than gods in fables are,
Has azure and verdure insolently fair
For kingdom stretching forth till waves which bear
No vessels, breaking, name its shores by fame's
Ferociously Greek, Slav, or Celtic names.
In forest-borders—dream's own blossoms there
Like bells chime softly till they, opening, shine—
Is the girl, orange-lipped; her knees she yields
Doubled to clear floods welling o'er the fields,
Nakedness shadowed, flecked, and clothed in fine
By rainbow-bands, the flora, and the sea,—
Such insolence and such immensity.

THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES.

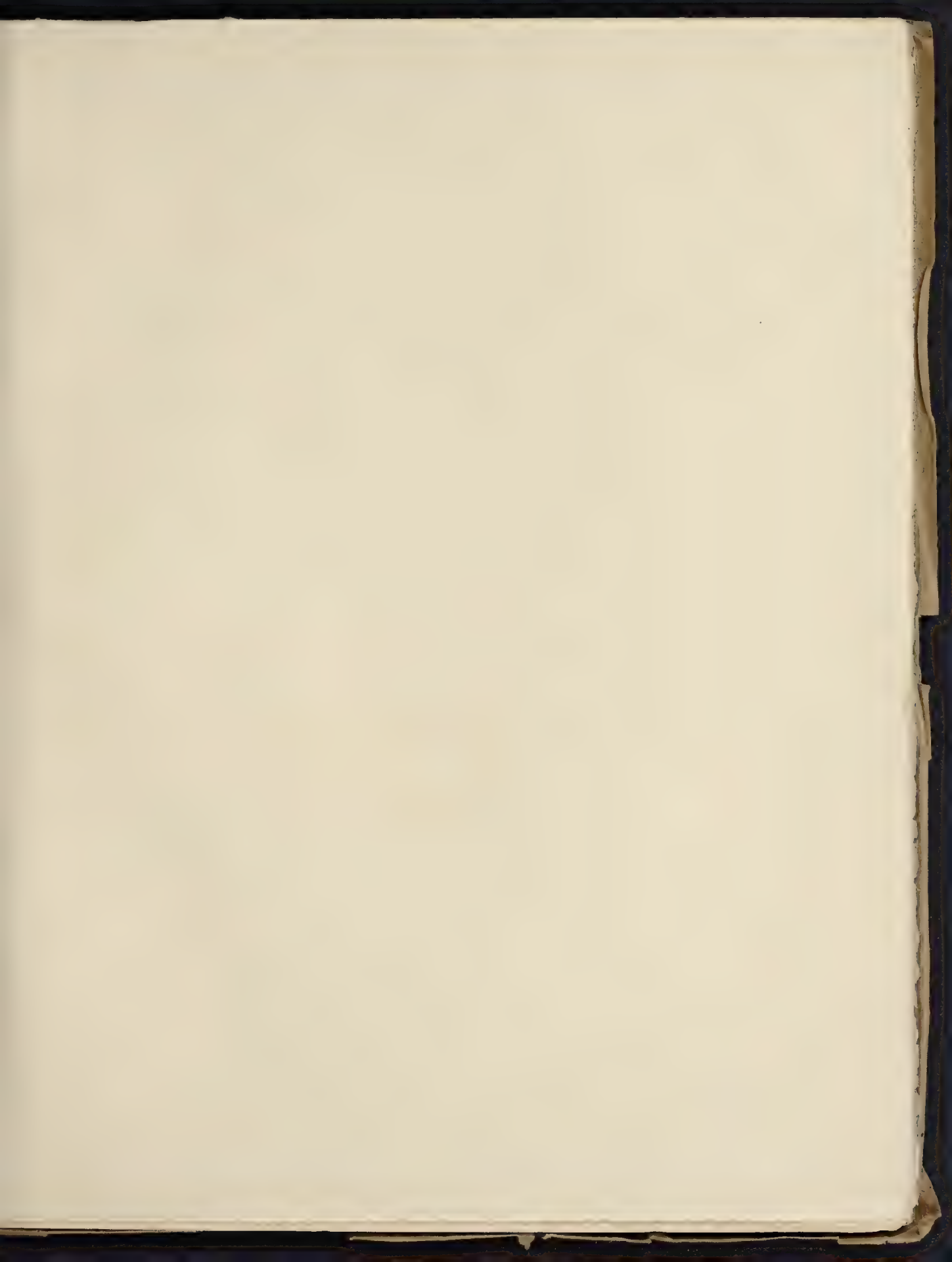
Ladies, who there and back again still pace
On terraces close neighbouring the sea,
Fairies and giantesses. Vert-de-gris,
A foam of verdure billows round the place;
Forbidding, proud, each woman-jewel's grace
Stands upright on rich soil in shrubbery
Or tiny garden's sun-nursed liberty—
Young mothers and grown sisters whose deep gaze
Far pilgrimages have with 'by-gones' filled,
Sultanas, princesses, tyrannical
In bearing and in costume how self-willed,
Little foreigners and folk amiable
Through mild unhappiness. Last, boredom's part,
The chat's hour of "dear body" and "dear heart."

CHORUS OF GRECIAN GIRLS. (VASE E. 783. BM.)

We maidens are older than most sheep,
Though not so old as the rose-bush is;
We are only as pretty as that.
We are gay as the weather. Our minds are deep
Like wells, as any boy tells
By the blushes, he dares not kiss.
The hills are fond of our chat.
We dance and shake like ringing bells,
Till our hair tumbles out of our hoods.
Our feet are bare, our feet are bare;
But we don't care, we don't care,
For the boys are away in the woods,
Hunting the boar or bear.
We pretend to fly
Up into the sky,
Jumping with both feet together,
Holding out like wings
Our sleeves and things.
Feeling as light as a feather,
We don't wonder whether
The day is long
Or the night short,
Since all our thought,
Is but big as the song
Of a brown fussy bee,
And just fills the flower which we
Each call me.



T. STURGE MOORE.





GARTH WILKINSON.

JAMES JOHN GARTH WILKINSON, born so early as January 1812, still lives; and still his tall strong frame wears a memory of the robustness of his long youth. The most of his life abnormally active, the harvest of it is little "sensational." For the physician sows seeds of which others gather the fruit; an exponent of spiritual science writes for obscurity (and who gives himself with passion to an exalted materialism, as Emanuel Swedenborg's, wraps a veil about obscurity itself); the dilettante has his circle of literary friends and is like to pass with them. Yet in the NEW CHURCH Dr. Wilkinson has a great worth, a position almost apostolic in its dignity; the man of virtue and knowledge is noble in spirit circles.

Dr. Wilkinson's literary labour has been great. His are many of the accepted translations of Swedenborg into English, and he has written much commentary of that seer's system: works indeed only to be received as ultimate by a New Churchman, but surely not the exclusive property of the Swedenborgian in their ultimate value. Their titles speak, wanting only the small knowledge of Swedenborg's writings which is universal to explain them, and indicate their purpose: EPIDEMIC MAN; THE AFRICAN AND THE TRUE CHRISTIAN RELIGION HIS MAGNA CHARTA. Also derived from Swedenborg, but infinitely expanded, is the marvellous book, not authorised I think by the College of Surgeons, called THE HUMAN BODY AND ITS CONNEXION WITH MAN, laying down a new scientific method, purporting to be a beginner's book of physiology.

These facts merely interesting to a narrower interest.

"The book attracted the attention of Rossetti," criticism will say, whenever hunger drives it to IMPROVISATIONS FROM THE SPIRIT. The volume is uncut, thickish; of the size known technically as 24mo. It contains one hundred and nine poems. It is bound in cloth of a cold piercing green colour. Its date is 1857.

The poems vary in length from eight verses to fourteen pages: their form is in all cases rudimentary, without technical ingenuity; especially in the rhymes. They are narrative and philosophical, the lyric character all but absent. Some, the most virile and free, have abstractions for subject: Newness, Gentleness, Uncertainty. Many are addressed to persons, to the members of the writer's family and circle, to W. M. Wilkinson, the writer of the book upon Spirit-drawing, a dozen or so of them. Many again describe the notable, in remotest symbolic terms; poets, philosophers and scientific men: Poe, Turner, Hahnemann, Finden the engraver, Berzelius, Chatterton, Tegnér, taken at random. High ethical and religious dicta are hung, for the rest, upon a variety of topics, surgical, biblical, physiological, political and religious; the object of the writer seeming to be to look at all the world from the very original standpoint he was able to reach, as it lay around him, radiating from his own heart and brain and soul.

Breadth, fearlessness and indifference give the first shock in the Improvisations.

provisations. These qualities perhaps the best excuse for the comparison to Blake's poems one sees inevitable; better than similarity of strange epithet and symbol, derived from a common source, let us not say the spiritual world, (at least yet) but disposition towards it.

Occasionally the impression, the mere vibration produced by the work as literary composition, is like that produced by some of Wordsworth's most lyrical work, the Lucy poems a good instance: where doggerel will break suddenly into a cry, so shrill and clear and passionate, that the doggerel becomes an essential to the song's worth: fusion of idea in Wilkinson corresponding to fusion of emotion in Wordsworth.

A little extract from MADNESS will illustrate much at this point:

He lies down to sleep:
Cockatrices come,
Purring from the deep,
From the Demon home:

Purring cats of hell,
Mousing for the mad:
They have left their shell,
For a season glad.

And he dreams their dream:
'Tis a woven lie:
Providence's stream
Runneth from on high:

They do ride the stream:
They are Kings of God:
And the sun world's gleam
Issues from their nod.

In great honesty, quotations must not be made from the book except with reference to subject. The injustice is best annulled by a further quotation, on the understanding that these extracts from MADNESS and SOLITUDE are to represent two poles of expression (moderation has guided the choice in each case):

I see it now: it lies upon the plain,
Like the big drops of summer's pregnant rain,
And o'er the city hovers, in the breeze,
And windeth like a river through the trees.

The darkness doth espy it where it lies:
And the night loveth it thro' many eyes:
And jewels of the morning come and play
Around the footsteps of its wintry way:

It is a shape in starry garments clad;
 It is a joy whose feet are ever sad:
 And in its hands it holds a book of light,
 Whose leaves are anthems of creation's height.

Here the element of imagination is sufficient: the cat serpents which wait upon the mad, and the personification of solitude; but the pulse beats low in these passages against the quick-following strokes of *THE BIRTH OF ADAM*, where brain and spirit are quick in every verse. Criticism of Wilkinson will never need to lose itself in eulogy; but certain summits in the *IMPROVISATIONS* are signal attainments of imagination: *THE BIRTH OF ADAM* among these, and in *PATIENCE* the mighty image where the vaulted back of the ass Christ rode into the State of God is become in heaven the bridge that angels walk. A further point must be touched upon (for a chief reason of respect to the poet, and others): Dr. Wilkinson's assertion that the poems were written by impression. To say no word on this subject beyond what Dr. Wilkinson has said in the note at the end of *IMPROVISATIONS* is the only way to escape the necessity of going back to radical principles of sciences not yet fully orthodox.

"A theme," says Dr. Wilkinson, describing his essays of writing from Influx, "is chosen and written down.* So soon as this is done, the first impression upon the mind which succeeds the act of writing the title, is "the beginning of the evolution of that theme; no matter how strange "or alien the word or phrase may seem. That impression is written down "and then another, and another until the piece is concluded."

"However odd the introduction may be, I have always found it lead by "an infallible instinct into the subject."

"The depth of treatment is in strict proportion to the warmth of heart, "elevation of mind, and purity of feeling existing at the time."

"In placing reason and will in the second place, it is indispensable for "man, whose highest present faculties these are, to be well assured what "is put in the first place. Hence, Writing from an Influx which is really "out (-side) of your Self, or so far within your Self as to amount to the "same thing, is either a religion or a madness. In allowing your faculties "to be directed to ends you know not of, there is only One Being to whom "you dare entrust them: only the Lord.† Of consequence, before writing "by Influx, your prayer must be to Him, for His Guidance, Influx, and "Protection."

The argument following exhibits Dr. Wilkinson's view that the character of his inspiration was pentecostal, as he proceeds to demonstrate his orthodoxy as a New Churchman. "Suffice it to say," a further explanation adds, "that every piece was produced without premeditation or preconception:

* Sometimes accompanied by a prayer or spell, invariably trash:

First shall his state be sung: (Turner's)

Then his art's bell be rung.

† Cf. Jakob Böhme, *Sämmtliche Werke*, Vol. vi. page 445: "Davon weiss ich zu sagen, was das für ein Licht und Bestätigung sei, wer das Centrum Naturä erfindet. Aber keine eigene Vernunft erlanget es; Gott versperret es zwar Niemandem, aber es muss in Gottesfurcht mit stetem Anhalten und Beten gefunden werden . . . sage ich treulich, als ich hoch im Centro Naturä und im Principio des Lebens erkannt habe."

"tion: had these processes stolen in, such production would have been impossible. The longest pieces in the volume occupied from thirty to forty-five minutes.* The production was attended by no feeling, and by no fervour, but only by an anxiety of all the circumstant faculties, to observe the unlooked for evolution, and to know what would come of it."

An isolated individual opinion has only a limited worth; another critic or occasion may develop the suggestion that the phenomenon of the Wilkinsons poems is that of ECSTATIC MEMORY. The experience of all poets, the sharply defined periods of their power, and the links between the life of thought and the moment of creation, shall come in aid to that intent. For a heavenly development there are two general requisites. The first is, an unremitting assiduity in all that naturally concerns the subject: the entire knowledge and manipulation and progress of the thing as far as industry can attain them. The second is, the heart's Prayer to the Lord, in New Church language, as good for the moment as any other name for spiritual disposition.

Concerning the speech of angels with man, Swedenborg lays down that the thought of man coheres with his memory, and his speech flows from it, therefore, when an angel or spirit is turned to him and conjoined with him. This is one of a thousand such definitions of Swedenborg which cover more or less completely, and invest such results as the Improvisations with authority, in the sense of spiritual knowledge.

JOHN GRAY.

P.S.—As an afterthought perhaps there may be no harm in printing out THE BIRTH OF ADAM in extenso:

From the rock a sound went forth:
'Twas an echo of the north:
On the sea much people stood:
'Twas the archangelic brood.

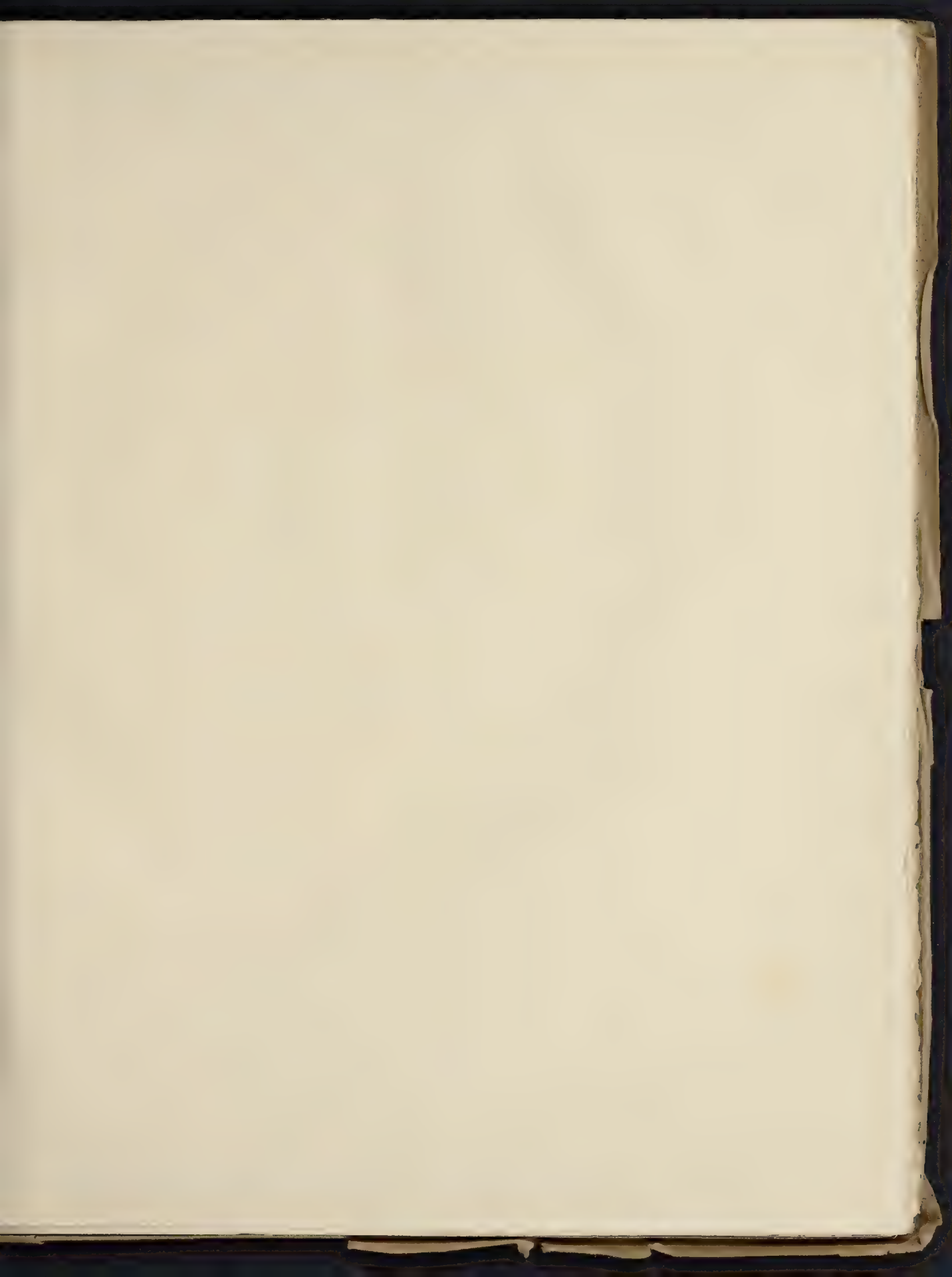
There was silver silence heard:
Sound as of creation's bird,
When with noiselessness of wing,
He doth wake the morning's string.

Ever and anon the noon
Glowed with deeper presence down,
And the archangelic band,
Mated heart, and clasped hand.

Came a finger o'er the sea,
Shoulder in eternity,
Where the palace infinite
Darkens with excess of light.

And

* The poem called *The Second Völuspá*, the longest in the book (336 unrhymed two-footed verses) occupied from fifty to sixty minutes.





And it stooped to rock of earth,
Touched it with a loving girth ;
Spanned it betwixt finger span.
Where a lightning river ran.

Where a love-eternal ray
From each finger-tip did play,
And the rock between was changed,
Where the loving lightning ranged.

And the mood of many things,
Rose into the air on wings,
And the river-lightning ran,
Music in creation-plan.

Then the rock perceived its glow,
And the rock began to flow,
And the image of the skies,
Slowly from the rock did rise.

And the finger-tips alone,
Were applied unto the stone,
And the builded Adam rose,
Like a man of outward shows.

And the mystery now lay
In a second finger-ray,
For the Adam incomplete,
Wanted all his bosom's heat.

So the fingers once again,
Sprinkled on a lightning rain :
And the mystery of love,
Through Adamic heart did move.

But the fingers wandered now
To his vacancy of brow,
And the place of thought was filled
With the light those fingers willed.

Then his feet were next correct :
And no station circumspect,
But was put within their palms,
Fit for terra firma's calms.

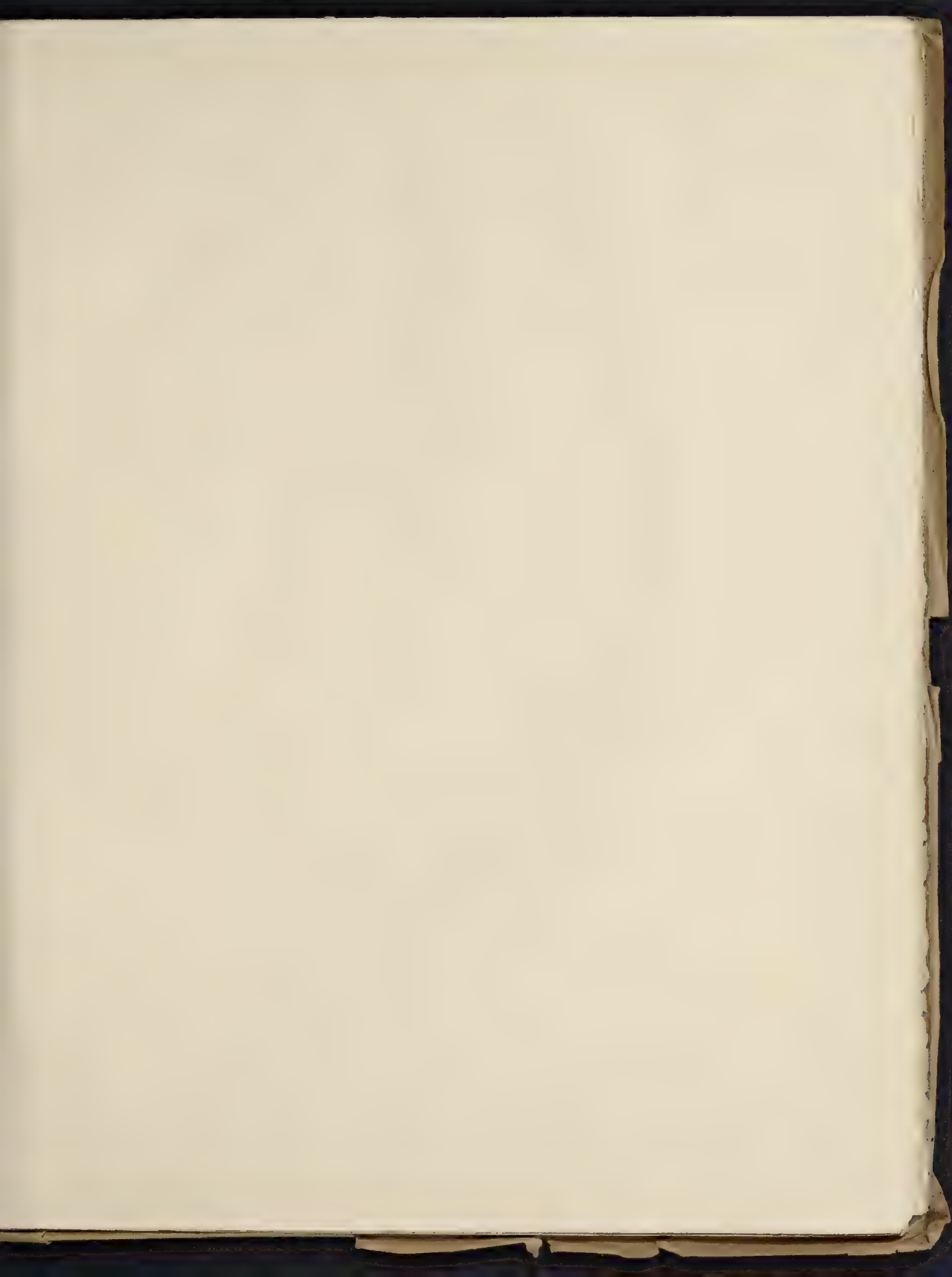
And his fingers, chosen joints,
That the oil of skill anoints,
Were the last completed tools :—
Over these the spirit rules.

So was Adam planned and made,
And his form and figure 'rayed
In the heaven, law after law,
In the firmamental jaw.

But no life was yet within :
For the heaven is but a skin :
And Archangels are but flies,
Save for that within them lies.

So in wonder silences,
Moved in rest eternal breeze,
And did mould without all ken
Body-soul in spirit men.

And then Adam lived : and life
Rolled down orders' stages rife :
And the rock of earth that stood,
Sailed for time on primal flood.



• DAPHNIS PLUCKS FROM THE TOPMOST
BOUGH WHERE THE GATHERERS HAD FOR-
GOTTEN IT THE TOPMOST APPLE LEST PER-
CHANCE FALLING IT SHOULD BE TRODDEN
INTO THE PURPLE GROUND OR BITTEN BY
THE VENOMOUS LIPS OF SOME SERPENT.



Daphnis and Chloe

OLD KITTY.

"Femme qui n'a filé toute sa vie

Tâche à passer bien des choses sans bruit."—LA FONTAINE.



HE sun's good-will to shine even usually on the place favoured heavenly origin. A hill, too, each red-cheeked dawn perchance found tell-tale; for of it half appeared to have been crushed by three streets piled against the raw side of the remnant—mere one-storey cottages the loftiest gables seemed, seen from the land, while ships, in which many men might pass months not over-cramped, shadowed with sails the doorways, and scrawled with rigging the outlook toward the river.

"But old women's tales stumble beginning; they know the end better," so the folk themselves said, who should have been well-informed; certain it is children pick flowers, and girls even among green fruit find some sweet.

Kitty's crib next beneath the sky was made bright by sun-flowers turned to gaze over the roof; the fronts being so gay that wharf-loungers got cricked necks, unable to take eyes off dancing windows attractive as though a buxom wench were at toilette behind every lattice.

Scattered on several hills, the town showed a general tendency to huddle in the bottoms, leaving grass, pasture for single donkeys and goats, above, where wind bullied butterflies.

Each morning old Kitty clattered down, basket on arm, and took her way through the market; not that she had, but lacked, business: so from morning to night went odd-jobbing for anyone.

There was bustle, as when ant-hills stand base to base, on stone steps, on wooden, through streets which had better have been stairs, of scandal-mongers who spiced jolly lives with small malice. One stood face to face with heaven, as did drunkards and idiots, at street-corners; so many the ups and downs were.

A dwarf innocent started from the wharves at nightfall to climb between the houses, a great labour foredoomed of unsuccess, yet with smiles attempted. "Luck to you" lads shouted, hurrying past to their sweet-hearts; or, with a girl, dawdled, and whispering laughed: she coyly looked pity. Endless steps, on which at length weakly his body found rest: the dew-moist slab inducing dreams, Kitty, benignant as he whom Jacob saw from the foot of a ladder mounting higher still, was revealed.

"I had supper alone last night"—"When none talks in the dark, one counts every turn between cold sheets," mornings and evenings, going or returning, she said to this almost dumb beast, who, adoring through vague years, had grown as faithful as habit. Crude expectancies of bliss, such as, inspired by the lubber's chaff in his vacant head, made song, she, plain of speech as person, fostered; thus beer-begotten the drama grew; rivals appeared—David, a mason, whose Welsh name was made difficult by redundancy of consonants beyond a legend's retention (on this simple one he even wished some grafted), who had come to learn what might be from foreign stone-cutters at work on the new St. Mary's church.

Gay fellows, noisy as birds, their jargoning not better understood, like a colony

colony of over-sea daws, busily they laboured and had nigh filled the building with saints, and covered it in devils. One of them made a second rival ; after a fortnight of silent acquaintance-making, they would chat each day, when she passed, for as much as twenty minutes, neither of them repaid save by the outflow.

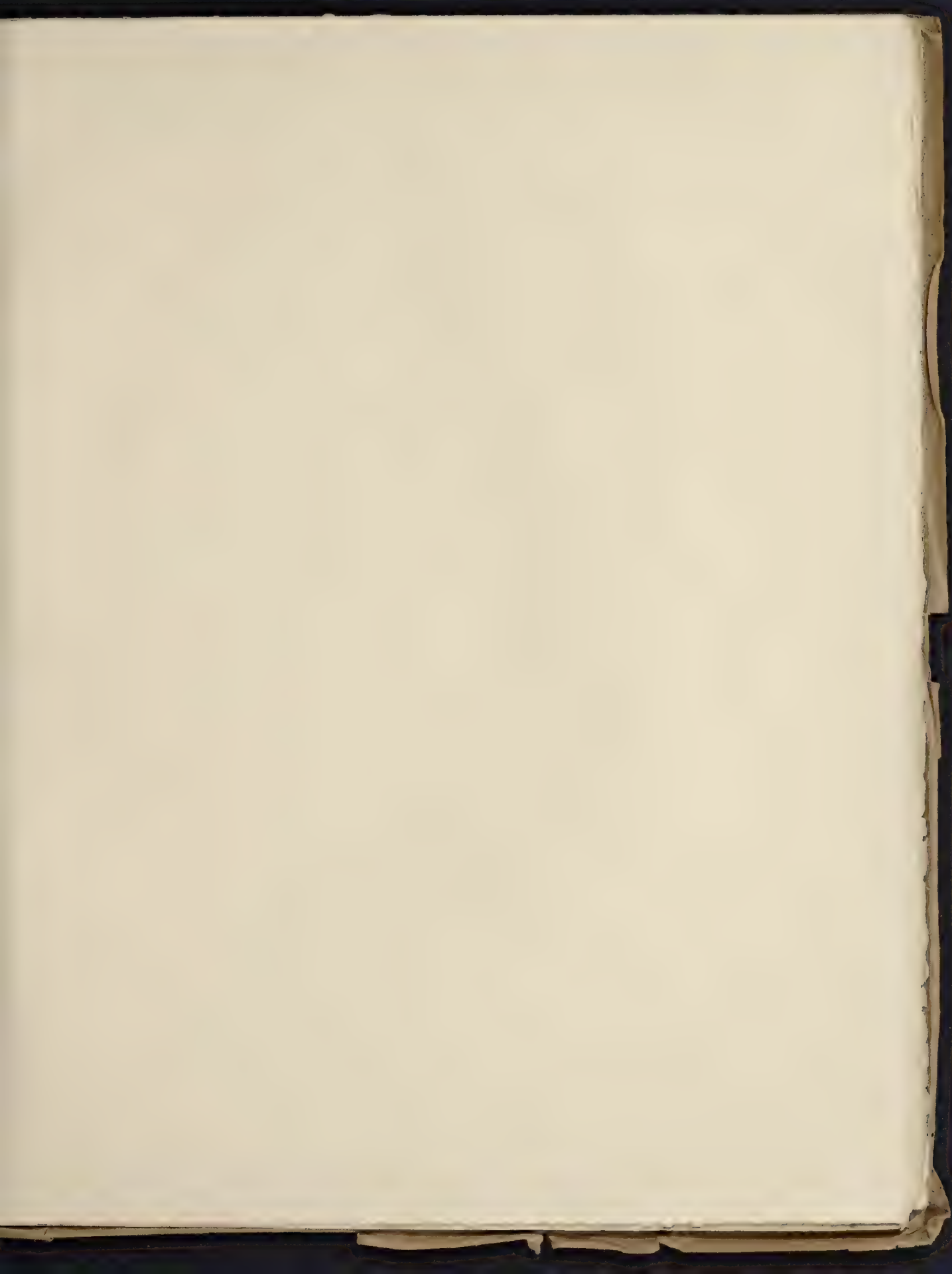
To work, of all but a loin-cloth he jauntily stripped himself. So much coquetry, however, a dandy never got from a fine suit ; such artifice was in a napkin, neither girl nor matron could pass without her eye being drawn thither and thus led to contemplation of splendid nudity.

The chips sprang in the sun ; merrily the ring of the chisel on the stone followed the short thud of the mallet ; industrious, he never turned but for Kitty and a tavern-wench with flagon, which was perhaps his secret.

David had come, silent man, from mountains. Not caring to ask questions, he put up at a wharf-side lodging : all gay wags knew the house ; the riff-raff sneaked thither when honest folk and rooks went home ; damp dust stank between slatternly scrubbed boards. Fagged, he sat down (economy lit no candle) and dozed ; laughter hung round him drowsily, grew harsher, and broke through his nap ; from the next room, up ramshackle hoarding, light climbed in lines to the rafters, blotted out evidently by a huge wardrobe near the door.

Women, who talked loudly to be overheard, using what words ! David knew he was fallen among harlots. David was pious ; still pious men are tempted. He was ; and remembered how much had been forgiven to Solomon and that great king his namesake. They were kings.

No curtain hid the stars. These women might not be clean, so many lewd men as there are in towns. Starting, he discovered they were naked ; some leant against the planks, bending them, broadening the chinks, through which they peeped joking of his sleep's soundness. The boards so bulged that light, creeping round, suggested features, hints to discovery ; ambiguity of indication lured David, as it used old geographers, through slightness of positive knowledge, to locate in unknown parts mountains, fertile districts, and where rivers ran : sudden fear lest the hoarding give dissipated these studies. Hurriedly, while they, remiss, flagged, he crept tip-toe, lifting his stool to within the blank caused by the press, got up, and began working the nails, which held the top where was the most strain, with strong leathery finger and thumb, till they came out ; with the third it would do. Descending he set ajar the door, during a burst of uproar. Just when again his board yearned like a tree about to bring forth a dryad, ready, he gave the last wrench. The dwarf, sleeping, was passed, before, slackening speed, he shook the nail free from his indented thumb, which he put in his mouth. Still with each step a bare arm and leg shot after the leaning plank awkwardly : uncanny ; he almost fancied claws. Arrived in the fine summer night, he met a meadow-sweet land-breeze, and saw Kitty awaiting her lover ; dazed, from the stars she turned towards him : over his stony-passive self, as, after drought, rains revivify the dusty track of a hill-stream, trust washed ; he asked, as of a mother, a bed.





At his open lattice next morning, smiling that his bundle had not been lost in his hurry, he saw her arrive from the well on the second terrace ; as she lifted her yoke, firm, beaded shoulders, a contrast to last night's lewd gleam, shone blithely.

He became her lodger, and giant anxiety to the little half-man far below ; but returned to his hills and kith, without having once quickened Kitty's pulse.

Still well-conditioned, old rather by familiarity than age, her days, like those of a plant, long ago had, like genet's trot, kept up and down constantly not evenly. The blood has a tricky itch during the teens, which keeps one a-tip-toe ; lively as a sea-cave all day long, would she laugh like its echoes.

On the road to a bean-feast once she had found every seat taken. When the going began to jerk, making a confusion of impetus, and balance difficult to be kept, every one offered their knees, of course ; nearly all somehow were fellows in that waggon. An uncle who had her in charge sat outside on the rail singing with no savour of tune ; good man, he had thought himself equally disgraced not to get drunk on saints' days and like occasions as to be anything but sober the rest of the year. She tried first one then another of the proffered laps, none suiting till at last, lured by gay dark eyes, she settled on knees of a foreign lad ; his jacket he had doubled across them, though naturally a plump cushion, the whole made to exactly suit the little romp by his keeping his heels off the ground : so that, in those lie-a-bed times, no queen's carriage had such capital springs ; while his gibberish, sparsely sprinkled with recognisable English, kept her in fits. Suddenly the good uncle, still quite sober, was shot from his precarious position into a hedge-bank.

Everybody got down in the roused dust to pick him up, his wrist broken, his neck, wryed by bending above the lasts, only saved by a thick clump of weeds, partly nettles ; their revenge distracted his attention from the more serious disaster.

They put him under charge of an ill-grown loon. Then Kitty in tears drew notice ; vainly was she assured, he would soon get better, this not being her trouble ; now, she must go back. Such innocent fears were soon laid : all vowed to take care of her ; the foreign friend repeating "take care" so funnily, she had to laugh.

An hour later those two words, so endearingly protective, kept purring to her ears from amid sleek Gascon. He climbed like a monkey till fear betrayed her, chased damsel-flies, or brought sprigs of bryony, their budded green soft as love-bird down, to enrich her hair ; spider-webs, from which shadows withdrew, shone like wide white disks, till she felt unsafely tall and wished to sit down. Noon had stilled her limbs' buoyancy, though beneath saucy strays of hair her eyes continued dancing. All bodily perfections of errant knight and ballad hero—such an upset her young blood, gaining no due expression in skipping feet, put her wits in—got jolted over to his account ; every virtue of saint or bible story became part and parcel of this unintelligible boy ; neither saint or angel stayed her, but she must

even draft from the blessed Lord himself, none else possessing sufficiency. What wonder she made small objection, when he kissed and they found themselves alone deep in the sunshine; nay, into the wood followed him through mysterious places, which stir has quitted as the tide does caves where a constant drip seems the faint pulse which tells that some one lives? Here no heart beat but their own, passing down shady ways even to the strange land of sleep—birthlike, dawnlit, as baby dreams long obliterated.

Inside the door, just beyond midnight, her mother and a candle first woke her. The hasty run through late twilight for the waggon, drunken roys-tering jolted through the night, all far-away: only those cooing unknown words near, beneath a stuffy cloak: even when, parting, a neighbour dragged her wrist, it seemed but some waif rudeness, pitiful in heaven.

"I'm in love, and we've slept together in the wood," then questions, then tears. Noticing the light, the good priest stepped in; taken into confidence, he thought, seeing she loved him so, reporting with such high eulogy, it were best to marry them, and undertook to hunt up the bridegroom, whose name even was not known; but the description was vivid. After visiting two or three inns, he found him heavy with sleep as a winter dormouse, turned the key, and took it away.

In time a new life, from no one knows where, was expected as witness and consummation to this oddly arranged marriage.

A sharp fellow; clever at his craft, wood-carving for the new choir; gaining sufficient to pacify the mother: though often out at nights, drunk—"and worse" neighbours said. Winter drawing to a close, he grew discontented, by no will of his married, mewed up with a girl unable to talk with him; till, returning one night to find mother-in-law and midwife installed, being not more sober than uncle Ben on saint days, there ensued a skirmish; he staggered upstairs into the room that she with a shriek filled: all resulting in the small life's return to its place.

Seemingly, she lay dead. When his wits came together, he could hear neighbours below called by the infuriated beldames; so let himself out of window and by backways, hunted of accusing cries; scuttled down to the wharves, with fox-like wariness; smuggled himself aboard a vessel which stole silently seaward before dawn; and thenceforth was drifted by unstable elements safely home to the unreflecting shallows of a blithe life.

T. STURGE MOORE

A HYMN TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF SAINT
FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

Love setteth me a-burning.
When my new Spouse had won me;
My piteous state discerning,
Had set His ring upon me:
The conqueror's prize returning,
Love's knife had all undone me,
All my heart broke with yearning.
Love setteth me a-burning.

My heart was broke asunder:
Earthward my body sprawling,
The arrow of Love's wonder
From out the crossbow falling,
Like to a shaft of thunder
Made war of peace, enthralling
My life for passion's plunder.
Love setteth me a-burning.

I die of very sweetness.
Yet be thou not astounded.
That lance of Love's completeness
So sorrowfully wounded!
Oh, broad the iron's meetness!
Not one arm's length, a hundred
Has pierced me with its fleetness.
Love setteth me a-burning.

Then were the lances scattered
The ballister was flinging;
And aye the blows which battered
Upon my shield were ringing.
What could protect me, tattered,
Before that engine sinking?
So was I wholly shattered.
Love setteth me a-burning.

Assailed with such instruction
That all my bulwarks bevelled,*
Well nigh was I destruction
And shamefully dishevelled.
Still hear my sorrow's fiction:
Anew a crossbow levelled
Vouchsafed me new affliction.
Love setteth me a-burning.

* Dr. Swift.

Such perils did it vomit,
Great stones with metal weighted;
And every missile from it
With pounds a thousand freighted.
Plummet on awful plummet,
Hail unenumerated,
Urged with an aim consummate.
Love setteth me a-burning.

None missed; and nought defended
My breast from their unerring.
To earth I fell, distended,
No pulse within me stirring:
No longer I pretended
To meet the blows recurring;
I lay like one expended.
Love setteth me a-burning.

Not dead, but with a vernal
Surpassing joy made splendid;
Revived from my heart's kernel,
With strength and purpose blended,
I followed those eternal
Pathways which surely ended
Within the lists supernal.
Love setteth me a-burning.

Then my new forces verging,
In helm and harness sightly,
All His dominion scourging,
On Christ I warred right knightly.
Great skill against Him urging,
I grappled with Him tightly,
The dastard in me purging.
Love setteth me a-burning.

My wounds avenged, we plighted
Our troth of truce and leisure
For Love's sake sorely slighted;
Love lavished without measure.
To Christ at length united,
Made fit to bear its treasure
My heart is warmed and lighted.
Love setteth me a-burning.

JOHN GRAY.

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